

Temperance - 1928

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TAMPA, FLA.

Times
SEP 10 1928
PUBLIC PULSE

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To the Editor of The Times: In copying
this sentence from the Macon Telegraph's
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"But as long as the negro as a whole is
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Therefore you have it, stripped of its
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The Telegraph is right: The black men
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Probably Mrs. Williams' appeal to them was
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Now, on the other side, the great hue
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Neither is this fuss over issues long since
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The most constructive thing in all of
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ERNEST B. SIMMONS.

Lutz, Fla., Sept. 7, 1928.

"Pernicious Meddling."

To the Editor of The Times: Rev. John
Roach Straton charges Governor Smith with
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But it seems to me that it would be better
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What I mean by being controlled by it
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Oh, run nigger, run, &c."

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Lake Park, Ga., Sept. 6, 1928.

TIMES

Valdosta, Ga.

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All the state officers were present
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ASTOUNDING!

The most astounding thing which has occurred in connection with the pending presidential campaign is reported from Georgia.

A convention of the Negro State W. C. T. U. of Georgia was held at Adel, that state, last week. Among its speakers was Mrs. Marvin Williams, president of the Georgia Women's Christian Temperance Union, who made a personal appeal to the negro women there assembled "to cast their votes against Governor Al Smith."

Mrs. Marvin Williams, be it known, was a member of the Georgia delegation to the national democratic convention at Houston. When a nomination was there made that was not to her liking she immediately proceeded to bolt. That bolt has been followed by her allowing her name to be presented as a Hoover elector from Georgia, and it is so printed in the newspaper of Ben Davis, the negro republican committeeman from that state who has been proven to have bartered postmasterships under the present republican administration and to have made Georgia white women, maidens and widows, pay him and his machine tribute upon their daily bread—derived from offices which he sold them.

That performance of Mrs. Williams' was hard to understand. Indeed, we could not understand it. But it is nothing compared with her Adel performance, commenting upon which the Macon Telegraph said:

The appearance before and appeal to a negro audience at Adel by Mrs. Marvin Williams, the woman who took democratic credentials to Houston while under a pledge not to support the nominee of the convention if it were Smith, Ritchie or Reed, but was given a free hand to support Hoover if she chose, is the first development in what the Telegraph had hoped would not come about in the political campaign now upon us. The Telegraph has always believed the negro should be kept out of politics in the south for his own good. There is no way by which the southern white man is going to let the negro as a race become effective as a political factor, except under the conditions which the republican party is pledged to bring about again if it can, and that is supervision of our elections by federal soldiers with fixed bayonets. It is futile to talk about the negro ever becoming in this section a political factor of any consequence, because when he does the white people are going to find a way to overcome it, and in the meantime the latter must suffer all the hardships of race prejudice and meanness in the white race.

The ultimate hope of the negro from a political standpoint is in refusing to ally himself with any party as a race, but to qualify individually as a citizen, and joining in all civic efforts and demonstrating his trustworthiness and freedom from being against all things the white man is for. This attitude on the part of the negro will eventually bring about recognition of him in individual cases, and his example will be accepted and followed by the better element of white people, which would be well for the country and section.

But as long as the negro as a whole is a

republican because he is a negro, the antipathy and prejudice is going to be fanned into flame in every election in which he participates, and it will bring about consequences that are exceedingly bad for all people. So that Mrs. Williams, the democratic deserter, in appealing to negro audiences over Georgia to go to the polls and help her elect Hoover, is adding one more achievement to her record of betrayal.

The Telegraph has kept away from any dragging of the negro question into this campaign. It has criticised Ben Davis as the republican national committeeman for Georgia because of his postoffice peddling as the representative of the national republican organization, in keeping with the policy of that organization for graft and theft wherever possible, but it has had nothing to say of Ben Davis as a negro, as might have been done.

Mrs. Williams' tactics of today are what the Ku Klux were organized to suppress in the terrible days of reconstruction. Today, however, she may enjoy the well wishing of that organization, as it is another organization and another day—but not another issue. She is an enemy of the negro, innocent perhaps, but none the less harmful.

The case has been well covered by the Macon Telegraph, but it needs to be added that when Mrs. Marvin Williams pursued the course followed by her at Adel she emphasized the fact that whether it ought to be or not the negro problem is something which southerners, at least, must consider in connection with this year's race for the presidency.

It is well known that the evils of reconstruction days in the south centered about one thing. That thing was the dangling of social equality and political lordship over southern whites as a bait before the negroes in order that the ends of carpetbaggers and scalawags might be served. The most difficult task the south has ever had was that of freeing itself of reconstruction's horrors and outrages and overcoming the negro as a political factor.

The first was accomplished through the sheer bravery and sacrifice of southern men. The latter was brought about by our primary elections. Whatever may be the reason for primaries elsewhere the underlying motive of them in the south was that of effectually disposing of the negro vote by the whites coming together in the primary, fighting out their differences and deciding to whom their solid vote should be given. The plan has worked well. But this year we find those who entered the party nomination refusing to abide the result and a southern white woman who participated in the democratic presidential nominating convention until its finish, Mrs. Marvin Williams, of Georgia, running as a republican candidate for presidential elector and making speeches to negroes and urging them to go to the polls in November and vote against the democratic candidates. Surely that is bringing the negro back as a political factor.

Just as surely the order issued by Herbert Hoover in which a former one promulgated

by William J. Harris, at present United States senator from Georgia, when he was in charge of the census bureau was revoked, just prior to the selection of delegates to the republican national convention in the state of Ohio, and white and negro workers in that department thrown into intimate contact strongly tends to encourage negroes to demand social equality.

A correspondent to today's Public Pulse says, among other things, "I have no fear of negro domination whoever may be president. The south will care for this situation." We do not know, of course, by what means that writer foresees the south attending to such a situation. Nor is this a time to argue the means. It is a time for forewarning of a situation which seems on its way, for saying that the south has already attended to it once—and for adding that it is cruel and unfair to force the south to attend to it again.

Prohibition is not the overshadowing issue in this campaign. It is by rights no issue at all in it, but has been lugged in for a purpose and nursed and ballyhooed about until some sincere men and women see it as the campaign's one and only issue. There are many other things more at issue and more important—since there is no possible chance of changing the eighteenth amendment, no matter who may be elected president. Among these is the thing suggested by the plank in the republican platform relating to the anti-lynching bill; by the well known fact that there are those who are demanding a force bill; by the fact that participants in primaries designed especially for doing away with negro control of elections are bolting and making speeches to negro conventions urging those composing them to vote the republican ticket in the coming election.

Mrs. Marvin Williams, Georgia white woman and but a few weeks ago a delegate to the national democratic convention, now a republican candidate for presidential elector and urging negro women to vote for Herbert Hoover is calculated to make those who will stop and think of the ultimate meaning of it shudder. Potentially, it can mean but one thing. That is—trouble.